

October 14, 2021

To owners, operators, and persons responsible for any indoor facilities used for sports and recreational fitness activities in the municipalities of the County of Simcoe, the District of Muskoka, and the Cities of Orillia and Barrie:

**Re: Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit Instructions to owners/operators of any indoor facilities or any premises or part of a premises used for sports and recreational fitness activities, in the County of Simcoe, the District of Muskoka, and the Cities of Orillia and Barrie, that are permitted to open under the Reopening Ontario (A Flexible Response to COVID-19) Act, 2020, S.O. 2020, c.17, as amended, and associated Regulations, as amended.**

The following listed recreational sports and recreational settings and activities are exempt from the instructions issued by this letter and detailed below due to sector specific legislation, directives and/or guidelines currently governing these settings with and for COVID-19 measures:

- Recreational settings used within a health care provider setting and health care entity as defined in Section 77.7 of the *Health Protection and Promotion Act, 1990*, for the purposes of rehabilitation who are subject to the Chief Medical Officer of Health's Directives issued thereunder;
- Recreational and sport activities within schools and school boards licensed under the *Education Act, 1990*;
- Recreational and sport activities within schools and private schools within the meaning of the *Education Act*, that are operated in accordance with a return to school direction issued by the Ministry of Education and approved by the Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health;
- Recreational and sport activities within Ontario provincial post-secondary institutions;
- Recreational and sport activities within childcare settings licensed under the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014*; and
- Recreational and sport activities taking place within an operational recreational and day or overnight camp for children operating in accordance with Ontario Regulation 503/17.

**The following instructions are pursuant to Schedule 1, s. 2 (2.1) of O. Reg. 364/20 under the Reopening Ontario (A Flexible Response to COVID-19) Act, 2020, S.O. 2020, c.17, as amended.** The Instructions are directed to owners, operators, and persons responsible for any indoor facilities or any premises or part of a premises used for sports and recreational fitness activities in the County of Simcoe, the District of Muskoka and Cities of Orillia and Barrie.

Given ongoing circulation of COVID-19 variants within Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit (SMDHU) during the fourth wave along with provincial data demonstrating that the Delta variant is twice as transmissible as previous variants, our collective efforts to prevent a significant spike in community transmission of the COVID-19 virus continue to be critical in the fight against the virus. This includes adhering to current restrictions in place for businesses and organizations via regulations under the *Reopening Ontario (A Flexible Response to COVID-19) Act, 2020* along with instructions provided by SMDHU on [September 1, 2021](#). This also includes recognition of the importance of COVID-19 vaccination to reduce the number and severity of COVID-19 infections.

The new provincial proof of vaccination requirements which came into place on September 22, 2021, under the *Reopening Ontario (A Flexible Response to COVID-19) Act, 2020* does not specifically apply to certain participants of organized sports, including volunteers, coaches and officials when requiring proof of vaccination. Volunteers, coaches and officials, however, are necessary for the operation of organized sports and recreational activities. Activities related to organized sports and recreational activities, particularly contact sports and high intensity fitness, put all individuals at

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280 Pretty River Pkwy.  
Collingwood, ON  
L9Y 4J5  
705-445-0804  
FAX: 705-445-6498

❑ **Cookstown:**  
2-25 King Street S.  
Cookstown, ON  
L0L 1L0  
705-458-1103  
FAX: 705-458-0105

❑ **Gravenhurst:**  
2-5 Pineridge Gate  
Gravenhurst, ON  
P1P 1Z3  
705-684-9090  
FAX: 705-684-9887

❑ **Huntsville:**  
34 Chaffey St.  
Huntsville, ON  
P1H 1K1  
705-789-8813  
FAX: 705-789-7245

❑ **Midland:**  
A-925 Hugel Ave.  
Midland, ON  
L4R 1X8  
705-526-9324  
FAX: 705-526-1513

❑ **Orillia:**  
120-169 Front St. S.  
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greater risk for COVID-19 transmission due to heavy breathing, close contact and length of contact, and lack of masks for source control. This risk is significantly increased when activities take place indoors. Requiring and verifying proof of vaccination for all individuals 12 years of age and older who are accessing indoor facilities used for sport and recreational fitness activities can greatly reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19 and improve protection from COVID-19, limiting the spread.

Given volunteers, coaches and officials will have close and prolonged contact with participants including youth and children, some of whom are unvaccinated, by way of this Letter of Instruction, I am requiring that proof of vaccination for these individuals, in addition to the individuals currently prescribed by provincial legislation, be obtained at the point of entry before admission to the facility is permitted including proof of identification.

Following consultation with the Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health, I am issuing the following enhanced instructions to owners, operators and persons responsible for facilities or any premises or part of a premises used for sports and recreational fitness activities, especially given that activities related to indoor recreational and sport activities have the potential to increase COVID-19 transmission. These instructions are issued pursuant to section 2(2) of Schedule 1 to Ontario Regulation 364/20 under the *Reopening Ontario (A Flexible Response to COVID-19) Act*. These instructions are to be implemented by every owner, operator or person responsible for indoor facilities or any indoor premises or indoor part of a premises used for sports and recreational fitness activities in the municipalities of the County of Simcoe, the District of Muskoka, and the Cities of Orillia and Barrie, unless specifically exempt by these instructions. These instructions are to be implemented in addition to any COVID-19 regulatory requirements, local bylaws or health unit Orders that are or may come into force or effect.

**Instructions to owners, operators and/or persons responsible** for facilities, or any premises or part of a premises, used for sports and recreational fitness activities in the municipalities of the County of Simcoe, the District of Muskoka, and the Cities of Orillia and Barrie:

Effective **November 25, 2021 at 12:01 a.m.**, I am instructing all owners, operators and persons responsible for facilities, or any premises or part of a premises, used for sports and recreational fitness activities in the County of Simcoe, District of Muskoka, City of Barrie, and the City of Orillia to implement the following measures:

1. Require each individual, age 12 years and older on the date of entry, at the point of entry, who attends the indoor area of the facility for the purpose of: coaching, teaching, instructing, officiating at organized sports or volunteering in any capacity for any purpose, to provide (i) personal identification and (ii) proof of being fully vaccinated\* against COVID-19 or a valid medical exemption.
2. Comply with all other requirements under the *Reopening Ontario (A Flexible Response to COVID-19) Act, 2020* and its regulations that apply to the facility.

*\* Acceptable proof of vaccination going forward shall be in the form as required by the Ministry of Health Proof of Vaccination Guidelines.*

The instructions set out above shall be in full force and in effect until further notice despite any changes to the SMDHU's step of reopening under the *Reopening Ontario (A Flexible Response to COVID-19) Act, 2020* as may be amended from time to time. You are required to comply with the additional measures above, pursuant to regulations under the Reopening Ontario Act including any successor legislation or regulations. As per the Reopening Ontario Act,

individuals who do not comply with the above noted requirements may be liable for a fine up to a maximum of \$100,000 or in the case of a corporation, not more than \$10,000,000 for each day or part of each day on which the offence occurs or continues.

For the purpose of these Instructions:

- **“Facility”** means any indoor facility or premises located in the County of Simcoe, District of Muskoka, City of Barrie, and the City of Orillia where organized sports or recreational activities are participated in, played and/or practiced for any part of the day, even if that facility or premises operates as another business or organization during other parts of the day(s).
- **“Fully Vaccinated”** is as defined within Section 2.1(5) of Schedule 1 to Ontario Regulation 364/20: Rules for Areas at Step 3 and at the Roadmap Exit Step made under the *Reopening Ontario (A Flexible Response to COVID-19) Act, 2020*, S.O. 2020, c. 17 (the “Reopening Ontario Act”)
- **“Owner/Operator”** means an owner/operator of an indoor sports and recreational fitness facility located in the County of Simcoe, District of Muskoka, City of Barrie, and the City of Orillia where organized sports are played and/or practiced.
- **“Organized Sport(s)”** means sport(s) and recreation including, but not limited to, sports leagues, organized pick-up sports, dance classes, gymnastics, martial arts and swimming classes, or as otherwise described in the Ministry of Health’s Proof of Vaccination Guidance for Businesses and Organizations under the Reopening Ontario Act. These measures are intended to reduce the transmission of COVID-19 where the collective efforts of various sectors, including workplaces are required to protect our communities.
- **“Medical exemption”** means an exemption confirmed by an individual who provides a written documentation as per the Ministry of Health Proof of Vaccination Guidance.
- **Person Responsible** means the holder of a permit/rental agreement to use the facility or designated individual which may include, but is not limited to, a coach, instructor, coordinator, trainer, organizer, or other person responsible for the compliance with public health measures related to COVID-19 and the facility.

Any questions regarding the application of this Letter of Instruction shall be directed to the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit’s Health Connection line at 705-721-7520 or 1-877-721-7520.

Sincerely,

**ORIGINAL Signed By:**

Charles Gardner, MD, CCFP, MHSc, FRCPC  
Medical Officer of Health

CG:SR:cm